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Notes on an Archæological Tour through Ramannadesa (the Talaing Country of Burma).

BY

TAW SEIN-KO.

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NOTES ON AN ARCHÆOLOGICAL TOUR THROUGH RAMANNADESA (THE TALAING COUNTRY OF BURMA).

BY TAW SEIN-KO.

UNDER instructions from the Government of Burma, I left Rangoon for Moulmein on the 5th December, 1891. As it was my intention to explore the whole of the country, which constituted **the ancient Talaing kingdom of Râmaññadêśa**, with special reference to the elucidation of the history of the places mentioned in **the Kalyâṇî Inscriptions**, I went down to Amherst by boat and returned to Moulmein by land, and the notes now published are those that I was enabled to make by the way.

The Mun or Talaing language is still spoken in the villages between Amherst and Moulmein, and is still taught in the monastic schools there; but, owing to there being no Government grants-in-aid given for the encouragement of its study, it is not taught in the lay schools. The Talaing language has a unique literature of its own; **numbers of inscriptions are recorded in it; and certain questions relating to the ethnography, history, antiquities, and languages of the peoples inhabiting Burma are awaiting solution, because the Talaing literature is still a** *terra incognita*. Considering that the study of the insignificant dialects of the Karen language, which has no indigenous literature, and whose alphabet was invented by Doctor Wade, an American Missionary, in 1832, receives considerable encouragement, it would be well if the Education Department could see its way to recognize Talaing in the curriculum of studies for indigenous schools in those parts of the Tavoy, Amherst, Shwêgyin, and Pegu districts, where it is still spoken and studied. This measure would, no doubt, be pleasing to the Talaings, and would be a token of gracious, although late, recognition of the services rendered by their fellow-countrymen to the British in the first and second Burmese Wars.[1]

About 20 miles from Amherst is **Wâgarû**, originally founded by King Wâgarû near the close of the 13th Century, A. D. The site of the old city is now completely covered with jungle; but traces of its walls and moat still exist. It is said that its walls were of laterite, and that images of the same material existed in its vicinity. But I saw neither the walls nor the images; apparently the laterite walls have served as road-metal for the contractors of the Public Works Department, and the images are hidden by jungle. I am not sure whether any excavations carried out at Wâgarû would bring to light any inscriptions or objects of archæological interest.

On the 11th December, **Pâgàt** was visited. **There are caves of great historical interest in its neighbourhood.** Pàgàt is the birth-place of Wâgarû, who restored the Talaing monarchy after Râmaññadêśa had been subject to Burmese rule for over two centuries, and is full of historical associations. It was here that Dàlàbàn,[2] the 'Hereward the Wake' of the Talaings, utilized the strategic position of the place, and for long defied the Burmese forces of (Alaungp'ayâ) Alompra's son and immediate successor, Naungdògyî.[3] The caves are natural openings in hills of submarine limestone rock. Some of them are over 1,000 feet in height and have precipitous sides. It is reported that large boxes of **Talaing palm-leaf manuscripts**, which were originally hidden by patriotic Talaings to escape destruction from the ruthless hands of the Burmese conquerors, are decaying[4] in the sequestered parts of these caves.

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[1] [I fully endorse this plea for the preservation of the Talaing language. It is rapidly disappearing before Burmese, and it is pitiable to note the absolute ignorance of many Talaings of their distinctive language. But historically it is quite as valuable as Burmese, if not more so. It is not desirable, speaking practically, to revive Talaing, but academically its preservation would be invaluable and a chair in the Rangoon College might well be devoted to Talaing and its epigraphy and literature.—ED.]

[2] *à*=*a* in Italian *cosa*. [3] *ò*=*aw* in 'law.'

[4] Subsequently, I learnt from a priest of the Mahâyin *kyaung* (monastery) at Kadô, that complete sets of Talaing manuscripts are being preserved in the Royal Libraries at Bangkôk. It would be a good thing to obtain a set for the Bernard Free Library at Rangoon. Perhaps the British Consul could be moved to prefer a request to

There are now few persons, who can read and understand these manuscripts; but, whenever they shall have been interpreted by a trained scholar, they will throw a flood of light on Talaing history, and on the history of learned, religious, and commercial relations between Ramaññadêśa, Ceylon, and Southern India. They will also solve certain questions connected with Pâḷi and Saṅskṛit philology and literature.

Owing to want of time only two caves, namely, the **Kògun** and Pâgàt, could be visited. The former presents a splendid sight. Its precipitous side facing the Kògun village is completely covered by painted terra cotta tablets arranged symmetrically in the form of terraces and spires. Inside the cave are lying **images** of various sizes in different stages of decay and ruin. They are found to be made of the following substances: lead, brass, wood, stone, brick, and lacquerware. The majority of them bespeak their antiquity, as they differ from modern ones in the following particulars:— the head is surmounted by a spiral truncated cone representing the Buddhist nimbus; the bristles of the hair are represented; the ears do not touch the shoulders; the forehead is prominent, but remarkably narrow; the eyebrows, eyes, and lips are the most prominent features of the face; the body is short and stout and the head is disproportionately big; the limbs are full and large; the sole of the right foot is not displayed.

No history is known to exist about the caves of this neighbourhood; nor is there any person, layman or priest, who can relate anything historically true about them. But, judging from the fact that Rāmaññadêśa was subject to Çambodian rule from the 6th to the 10th century A. D., and again to Siamese rule in the 14th century, it may be safely inferred that most of the images are of **Cambodian or Siamese origin.** The general architectural effect of the cave, and the resemblance of these images to those of Siam, favour this view. A closer examination in detail, however, might reveal the fact that some of the images were dedicated to Brahmanical worship, which was favoured by the ancient Kings of Cambodia, that others are of Sinhalese or Dravidian origin, and that there is some relationship, historical, religious, and architectural, between the caves in the Amherst district and the cave temples of Cambodia and India. I brought away three small wooden images with legends, now illegible, but conjectured to be in the Siamese characters inscribed on their pedestals. (See plate.)

The **Pâgàt Cave** was next visited. It contains nothing of interest. It is now the home of bats, whose dung yields an annual revenue of Rs. 600. It would appear that the contents of this cave have been made away with in order to make room for the more valuable dung!

Near this cave is a monastery, now occupied by a priest from Upper Burma. Since the annexation of that province to the British Crown, numbers of Buddhist priests from it have settled down in this district. Owing to their reputed learning and their conversational powers, they are highly esteemed and are abundantly supplied with the necessaries of life. The Talaing priests are, as a rule, somewhat lax in their observance of strict precepts: *e. g.*, they are possessed of boats and landed estates, drive about in bullock-carts, drink tea in the evenings, and smoke cigars in public! Such conduct is now being followed by the priests from Upper Burma, who appear to be imbued with the truth of the proverb: "At Rome, do as Rome does." The burden of supporting the priests, who do very little in return for their maintenance, and who idle away most of their time, because the educational work is better and more efficiently done by the lay schools, is in the Talaing Country indeed a heavy one. On an average about 100 houses support a *kyaung*, and every village that has any pretence to piety must have a *kyaung* of its own. The standard of material comfort of the villagers,

this effect to His Siamese Majesty. The late Dr. Forchhammer succeeded in procuring a number of ancient Talaing manuscripts from the caves in the neighbourhood of Pâgàt. I understand some of them, if not all, are now lying in the Bernard Free Library. [The Chief Commissioner, Burmah, has addressed the British Consul at Bangkok on the subject.—ED.]

INSCRIBED WOODEN IMAGES FROM THE KÒGUN CAVE.

Taw Sein Ko.

Scale 625.

Photo zinco., S I. O, Calcutta.

Reg. No 866, Major R. C. Temple.—Jan. 93.—805.

who maintain the *kyaung*, may be a low one, but the *pôngyî* in charge of the *kyaung* is fed on the fat of the land.

On the 14th December, I visited **Kôkarêk**, which is inhabited by Burmans, Talaings, Shâns, Karens, and Taungðûs. The **Taungðûs** are an interesting people. They have a literature[5] of their own, and I obtained a copy of a poetical work called **Suttanippan** (*Suttanibbâna* or *Nibbânasutta*).[6] The language of the Taungðus contains words bodily borrowed from the languages of the peoples by whom they are surrounded. The Taungðûs resemble their congeners, the Karens, in physical appearance; their build is thick-set, and they have full, round, and heavy features. At Kòkarêk the Taungðû language is purer than at Thatôn, although there have been many inter-marriages between the Taungðûs and the Shâns.

The meaning of the word **'Taungðû' is Highlander**, in contradistinction to the people of the lowlands. A similar distinction obtains in Cambodia, the ancient Kingdom of the Khmers.[7] The latter M. Mouhot describes thus: — "Having a great taste for music, and being gifted with ears excessively fine, with them[8] originated the *tam-tam*, so prized among the neighbouring nations; and by uniting its sounds to those of a large drum, they obtain music tolerably harmonious. The art of writing is unknown to them; and as they necessarily lead a wandering life, they seem to have lost nearly all traditions of the past. The only information I could extract from their oldest chief was, that far beyond the chain of mountains which crosses the country from north to south, are other *people of the high country* (such is the name they give themselves; that of *savage* wounds them greatly), that they have many relations there, and they even cite names of villages or hamlets as far as the provinces occupied by the Annamite invaders. Their practice is to bury their dead." The above description would, with slight modifications and with the exception of the part relating to their ignorance of the art of writing, answer very well for that of the Taungðûs.

The Taungðûs call themselves Phâô, *i. e.*, ancient fathers, and have a tradition that large numbers of them emigrated years ago from their original seat of Thatôn to a State of the same name in the Shân country. Since then they have borrowed largely from Shân literature: in fact, their books, most of which have been translated from Shân, contain a large admixture of Shân words.[9]

The Taungðû alphabet appears to have a closer affinity to that of the Talaings or the Burmans than to that of the Shâns, as it recognises the medial letters, which are absent in Shân. **The one peculiarity deserving of notice in the pronunciation of the letters is the Indian sound accorded to the letters of the palatal class, *e.g.*, च is pronounced *ch* and not *s*, as the Tibetans, Burmans, and Talaings pronounce.** This is a remarkable fact showing the probability of the Taungðûs having received their alphabet direct from Indian colonists.[10]

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[5] "My authority for this is the following extract of a note from a gentleman of the American Mission to Lieutenant Newmarch:—

"The Toungthoos *have* a written language and books, and kyoungs and priests. I have *seen* their books, and on the fall of Sebastopol I *printed* the Governor-General's proclamation for Lieutenant Burn in Toungthoo, but I confess it was the *first* and only thing that was ever printed in Toungthoo."—Yule's *Mission to Ava*, Appendix M., page 383.

[6] [This is now in the British Museum. Dr. Cushing informs me that Taungðû MSS. are frequently to be met with in Shân monasteries, and that the commonest text of all is the *Suttanippan*.—Ed.]

[7] *Vide* Mouhot's *Travels in the Central Parts of Indo-China, Cambodia, and Laos*, page 24.

[8] Savages to the East of Cambodia, called by the Cambodians their elder brothers.

[9] [Dr. Cushing informs me that the Taungðû Language is closely related to that of the Pghò Karens and that a Taungðû can easily learn to make himself intelligible to a Pghò Karen in a short time.—Ed.]

[10] [It may some day help much in determining the original sound of many Burmese words, which, no doubt have, in historical times, changed their sounds.—Ed.]

The Taungðû language, as evidenced by the comparative vocabulary shown below, has closer affinity to Burmese than to Shân or Talaing:

Taungðû.	Burmese.	Meaning.
Ta-pâ[11]	Ta, tit	One.
Nî-pâ	Hna, hnit	Two.
Sôn-pâ	þôn ः[14]	Three.
Lît-pâ	Lê ः	Four.
Ngat-pâ	Ngâ ः	Five.
Sû-pâ	Chauk	Six.
Nit-pâ	Khuhnit...	Seven.
Sôt-pâ	Shit	Eight.
Knt-pâ	Kô ः	Nine.
Tachî ः[13]	Tasè[15]	Ten.
Mî ः[13]	Nê	Sun.
Lâ	Là	Moon.
Châ	Kyè[16]	Star.
Phâ	Phà	Father.
Mê ः	Mi	Mother.
Lô	Lû	Man.

On the 28th, I started for **Thatôn** and reached it on the same day. **Þatôn**, as the name spelt Thatôn, Thahtun, and Thatone, is pronounced, has been identified by Burmese and Talaing writers as the **Suvaṇṇabhûmi** of the Buddhist books, and the **Aurea Regio** of Ptolemy and others. It is bounded on the east by the **Þinganêk** Range, which is about 12 miles long, and trends from north to south. On the west is an immense rice plain, which is about 15 miles in breadth, and beyond that is the sea. In the rainy season the plain is covered by water and navigation over it by boat is possible.

According to a Talaing tradition, Thatôn was founded by **Sîharâjâ**, a contemporary of Gautama Buddha. In choosing the site of the new city he consulted his foster-father, the Ṛishi of Zingyaik, and was advised to select a spot where gold was found, and to which a large population would be attracted in a short time. The spot where the Jubilee Memorial Fountain, erected in 1888, is now playing, is still pointed out as the site of the palace of Sîharâjâ and Manuhâ, the first and last kings of Thatôn. Close by is the gold-bearing stream of the Shwêgyaung Sân, which is perennial and issues from the **Þinganêk** (Singanika) Hill. Gold is still worked by isolated individuals at the beginning and close of the rainy season, but the quantities obtained are not commensurate with the amount of labour involved.

There are **five Talaing inscriptions** at Thatôn: four in the enclosure of the Shwêzâyân Pagoda, and the remaining one under a banyan tree at Nyaungwaing. Their palæography indicates that **their age is about 400 years.**

Three brick buildings near the Shwêzâyân Pagoda are known as the libraries, whence Anôrat'âzò, King of Pagân, is said to have removed the "five elephant-loads of Buddhist scriptures" in 1057 A. D.

[11] *Pâ* denotes an individual unit. Its cognate form, pronounced with the heavy tone, is employed as a numeral co-efficient in Burmese.

[12] *Ch* in Taungðû is interchangeable with *s* in Burmese.

[13] This word means *fire* in Burmese; but the primitive conception of the sun as the *source of heat* may have possibly existed.

[14] The sign ः denotes that the syllable to which it is affixed should be pronounced with the heavy tone.

[15] *è* as *ai* in 'pair.'

[16] *Ky* = *ch* in Burmese as often as not.

Terra cotta tablets, inserted in niches in the Þagyâp'ayâ (pagoda) within the same enclosure are of considerable interest. Most of them have been destroyed, and the meaning of the representations is not accurately understood. But they appear to indicate that the people, whoever they were, who constructed these tablets, **undoubtedly professed Brahmanism or Hinduism,** and that they had attained to some degree of civilization. **Siva with his trident is the predominant figure;** conveyances are drawn by single ponies, and women wear their hair in big knots at the back of the head. The features of the persons represented are of Mongolian cast, and resemble those of the Karens and Taungðûs of the present day.[17]

The Þagyâp'ayâ, in common with other sacred edifices built by the Talaings, is constructed of hewn laterite; and the existence of several tanks in its vicinity indicates the source whence this building material was obtained.

There are three sculptures in bas-relief on stone, representing **Vaishṇava symbols,** lying in the enclosure of the Assistant Commissioner's Court-house. These have been removed to the Phayre Museum at Rangoon.[18]

Nàt (*i.e.* **spirit) worship** is still, as in other parts of Burma, one of the prevailing forms of belief at Thatôn. I visited the temple of the **Nàt called Phô-þhô**=Grandfather. Tradition, which is, in this case, *primâ facie* palpably false, says that, when this Nàt was a human being, he was charged by Sôṇa and Uttara, the Buddhist missionaries who visited Râmaññadêśa in the third century B.C., to safeguard Thatôn against the attacks of the *bilûs* or ogres. The image of Phô-phô represents an old man of about 60 years of age, sitting cross-legged, with a white fillet round the head, and a moustache and pointed beard. The forehead is broad and the face bears an intelligent expression. The upper portion of the body is nude, and the lower is dressed in a *chêk pasô*, or loin-cloth, of the zigzag pattern so much prized by the people of Burma. The right hand rests on the right knee, and the left is in the act of counting the beads of a rosary. The height of the figure is about five feet. In the apartment on the left of Phô-phô is an image representing a benign-looking *wun*, or governor, in full official dress. Facing the second image in a separate apartment is the representation of a wild, fierce-looking *bô*, or military officer, in uniform. The fourth apartment on the left of the *bô* is dedicated to a female *nàt*, who is presumably the wife of Phô-phô. But there is no image representing her. It is a noteworthy fact that, as it would be if in India and Ceylon, this temple is held in veneration by various nationalities professing different creeds. The images of the *nàts* are in a good state of preservation, as they are in the custody of a medium, who gains a comfortable livelihood thereby. An annual festival, which is largely attended, is held in their honour. These *nàts* are to my mind clearly an embodiment of hero-worship, representing some benevolent and sympathetic Burmese governor and his relatives, who left behind them a kindly memory.[19]

On the 31st December, I visited the **Kôkþônnayôn Hill,** which is about eight miles to the west of **Bilin.** On the top of the hill are two images representing the Buddhist missionaries, **Sôṇa and Uttara,** in a recumbent posture and with their hands clasped towards a stone vessel placed between them. The vessel is reputed to contain a hair of Gautama Buddha. Around Sôṇa and Uttara are the figures of *yahàndàs*, or Buddhist saints, with full, round, and heavy features. The foreheads of these figures are broad and prominent, but retreating; the nose is big and long; and the mouth large. At the four corners of the platform on the top of the hill, are figures of a strange monster, half man, half beast, called, by a false Palicism, **Manussiha.**

[17] A description of these tablets is given at pages 716 and 717 of the *British Burma Gazetteer*, Vol. II. [I do not personally quite agree with the statements in the text and will endeavour to show, in a paper now preparing for publication in this *Journal*, that all the Thatôn sculptures are quite compatible with the Buddhist cult.—Ed.]

[18] [Though of a most interesting Indian character, it is probably yet premature to state their precise nature.—Ed.]

[19] [I may note that, when I was in Thatôn, I was told that they represent a Portuguese governor and his staff, and that they are consulted before entering on any kind of project. If they smile the project will succeed.—Ed.]

There is no such Pâḷi word, but the term has been coined to designate a monster with one human head and two lions' bodies. The 'origin' of the *manussîha* is thus recorded in the **Kalyâṇi Inscriptions**:—

"The town (Gôḷamattikanagara= the modern Ayetbèmà in the Shwégyin district) was situated on the sea-shore; and there was a *rakkhasî*, who lived in the sea, and was in the habit of always seizing and devouring every child that was born in the king's palace. On the very night of the arrival of the two *thêras*, the chief queen of the king gave birth to a child. The *rakkhasî*, knowing that a child had been born in the king's palace, came towards the town, surrounded by 500 other *rakkhasas*, with the object of devouring it. When the people saw the *rakkhasî*, they were stricken with terror, and raised a loud cry. The two *thêras*, perceiving that the *rakkhasî* and her attendants had assumed the exceedingly frightful appearance of lions, each with one head and two bodies, created (by means of their supernatural power) monsters of similar appearance, but twice the number of those accompanying the *rakkhasî*, and these monsters chased the *rakkhasas* and obstructed their further progress. When the *pisâchas* saw twice their own number of monsters created by the supernatural power of the two *thêras*, they cried out: 'Now we shall become their prey, and being stricken with terror, fled towards the sea."

Fergusson, in his *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture* (page 622), makes the following pertinent remarks on the origin of this monster: "This illustration (of the Shwêdagôn Pagoda at Rangoon) is also valuable as showing the last lineal descendant of these great human-headed winged lions that once adorned the portals of the palaces at Nineveh; but after nearly 3,000 years of wandering and ill-treatment have degenerated into these wretched caricatures of their former selves."[20]

In an image-house at the foot of the hill is a brass bell on which **the old Talaing inscription has been effaced, and a modern Burmese one engraved.** It is, perhaps, hopeless to recover a copy of the ancient inscription.

On the 1st January 1892, I visited the **Tizaung Pagoda at Zôktnôk village,** which is about 6 miles to the **north of Bilin.** The basement of the pagoda is constructed of blocks of laterite, each about 2 feet by 1½ feet by 1 foot in dimension. Some of the images, as well as the receptacles for offerings, &c., placed around it are of the same material, and bear traces of ornamentation. In the neighbourhood are sculptures in relief engraved on large laterite blocks, which are so arranged as to form panels on the face of a wall or rampart of earth 450 feet long and 12 feet high. They are known as the *sindàt-myindàt* (elephants and horses of war); but the representations are those of elephants and tigers, or lions, alternately with those of *nàts* interspersed between them.[21]

The Kêlâbà (Kêlâsa) Pagoda — the Kêlâsabhapabbatachêtiya[22] of the Kalyâṇi Inscriptions — was visited on the 2nd January. It is situated on a steep hill about 2,000 feet high, and appears to have been renovated. It derives its sanctity from the tradition that, like the Kyaiktiyô and Kôkbênnâyôn Pagodas, it contains one of the three hairs given by Gautama Buddha to the Ṛishi Kêlâsa. Near the pagoda are **two stone inscriptions cut by King Dhammachêti.** They are in the Talaing character. The engraved portion of one has been entirely destroyed and only the socket remains standing, while half of the other has been broken. Only one *manussîha*, facing seawards, is found on the pagoda platform. Numbers of square bricks with the representation of a lotus flower impressed upon them are lying about the place.

[20] [The very remarkable resemblance of the *chinthé* of Burma (out of which, no doubt, grew the *manussîha*) to the winged lion of Nineveh, down to the very *beard*, has often impressed me. S. also has that of the *tô* of Burma to the winged bull. An intermediary form of the *chinthé* is perhaps to be seen in the two lions couchant (*chinthé*) from the Amarâvatî Tope in the British Museum.—Ed.]

[21] [They probably were intended to represent a military expedition. See below, note 29.—Ed.]

[22] [The syllable *bha* in this word is remarkable, and occurs, apparently as a local peculiarity, in other Palicisms of the Talaings. *E.g.*, Tikumbhachîti = the modern Palicized name of the Shwêdagôn Pagoda.—Ed.]

The Kêlâsa Hill abounds in plants used in Burmese medicine. The plant, called *maukk'adò*, is employed as an antidote against snake-poison, and another, called *k'wêgaungzawet*, is used in curing hydrophobia.

On the same day, the village of **Ayetbèmà**, which is four miles off, was visited. It is the ancient **Taikkulâ and the Gôḷamattikanagara of the Kalyâṇî Inscriptions.** Dr. Forchhammer in his *Notes on the Early History and Geography of British Burma*, II. page 7, says: "Though the seashore is now about twelve miles[23] to the west, this place was still an important seaport in the 16th and 17th centuries; it is marked on the map of Professor Lassen as **Takkala**, but erroneously placed a few miles north of Tavoy. Cables, ropes, and other vestiges of sea-going vessels are still frequently dug up about Taikkulâ."[24]

As to Gôḷamattikanagara (for Gôḷa read Skr. Gauḍa), **if the evidence afforded by the Kalyâṇî Inscriptions can be relied on, the settlement in Suvaṇṇabhûmi was apparently colonized from Bengal during one of the struggles for supremacy between Buddhism and Brahmanism and possibly Jainism also.**[25] At the conclusion of the third Buddhist Council it was remembered by the mother-country, and missionaries were sent to it in order to re-establish community of faith.

There used to be a **Talaing inscription near Ayetbèmà**, but it was removed to the Phayre Museum at Rangoon about eight years ago. Traces of a wall and moat still exist, and fragments of pottery and of glazed tiles are found in the neighbourhood.

Pegu was reached on the night of the 3rd January. Extensive ruins are extant on the east and west face of the town. The ruins at **Zaingganaing**, on the west side, comprise those of **Kalyâṇîsimâ, Mahâchêtî, Yabêmyô, Kyaikpun,**[26] **and Shwêgûgyi. There are ten inscriptions at Kalyâṇîsimâ, one at Yabêmyô and twenty-two at Shwêgûgyi.** Between Kalyâṇîsimâ and Mahâchêtî is an enormous image of Gautama Buddha in a recumbent posture, measuring about 181 feet in length. Treasure-hunters have been hard at work among these ruins, and I am told that their acts of vandalism are countenanced both by the *pôngyîs* and the native officials, who expect a share in the "finds." Most of the stone inscriptions have been broken by treasure-hunters, or by pagoda slaves, who were anxious to obliterate the record of their origin. In some cases, the names of persons dedicated as pagoda slaves have been carefully chiselled out.[27]

Pegu is the Thebaid of Râmaññadêsâ, as Pagân is of Burma Proper, and its ruins have great claim to a detailed archæological survey. The **Kalyâṇîsimâ** is the most interesting of all. (See plate No. 1.) It is an ancient Hall of Ordination, to which Buddhist priests from all parts of Burma, and even from Ceylon and Siam, used to flock to receive their *upasampadâ* ordination. **Close by are ten stone-slabs covered with inscriptions on both sides.** All of them are more or less broken, but the fragments, which are lying scattered about are

[23] Of late, the sea has been encroaching on the land. At the time of my visit, the sites of many villages, which derived their wealth and prosperity from the rice trade, were under water.

[24] The subject of the identification of this place with the Takôla of Ptolemy and the Kalah of Arabian Geographers is discussed, *op. cit.*, at pages 12—16, and at pages 198 and 199 of McCrindle's *Ancient India described by Ptolemy*.

[25] The Kalyâṇî Inscriptions (1476 A. D.), obverse of first stone, say "this town is called to this day Gôḷamatikanagara, because it contains many mud and wattle houses resembling those of the Gôḷa people."

[26] Four colossal images of Buddha sitting cross-legged, back to back, and facing the cardinal points. The height of each image is about 90 feet; the thumb measures 8 feet, the arm from the inner elbow-joint to the tip of the middle finger 33 feet, the distance from knee to knee 62 feet. The images represent the four Buddhas, who have appeared in this Kalpa, namely, Kakusandha, Kônagamana, Kassapa, and Gautama. Similar images are found at Pagân, the prôtotype being probably those of Angkor Thôm. [These peculiar images are clearly Cambodian, and form a tower of the ordinary Cambodian type. Terra cotta tablets, much mutilated unfortunately, found in the neighbourhood clearly represent Cambodian figures, such as are common in Pnom-Penh.—ED.]

[27] [A common and unfortunate practice all over Burma.—ED.]

capable of restoration. Their average dimensions are about 12 feet high, 4 feet 2 inches wide, and 1 foot and 3 inches thick. They were set up by **King Dhammachêtî** after he had founded the Kalyâṇîsimâ **in 1476 A. D. The language of the inscriptions is partly Pâḷi and partly Talaing.** (See plate No. 2.) Numerous copies of the Pâḷi portion on palm-leaf are extant, and from two of them I have prepared a text transcribed in the Roman character.[18] The great value of the Kalyâṇî Inscriptions rests on the detailed information they give of the manner in which *simâs* (*bêngs*) should be consecrated in order to secure their validity, of the intercourse of Pegu and Burma with Ceylon and Southern India in the 15th century A. D., and of the Burmese view of the apostolic succession of the Buddhist priesthood.

The Mahâchêtî Pagoda is a huge pile of brick and laterite, built by **Hànbâwadî Sînbyûyin** about the middle of the **16th century A. D.** Only the square basement now remains, measuring about 320 feet wide at the base, and about 170 feet high.

Nothing definite is known about the ruins of Yabêmyô, Kyaikpun, and Shwêgûgyî. In the neighbourhood of the last-named Pagoda, glazed terra cotta tablets exhibiting, in relief, figures of human beings and animals were found lying scattered about. A number of such tablets have been collected in Mr. Jackson's garden near the Kalyâṇîsimâ. All these should be acquired by Government and sent to the Phayre Museum at Rangoon. They appear to have been manufactured by colonists from India.[19]

The religious buildings at Pegu suffered greatly at the hands of the **Portuguese adventurer, Philip de Brito y Nicote, alias Maung Zingà, who held his Court at Syriam** at the beginning of the 17th century, and also at the hands of Alompra's soldiery, who, being incensed at the acts of sacrilege committed by the Talaings during their ephemeral conquest of Burma Proper, wreaked their vengeance when their turn came. It is said that Maung Zingà, who was originally a ship-boy, and was stationed at Syriam to watch events and to represent his master, the King of Arakan, entertained ambitious designs of holding Pegu as a dependency of the Crown of Portugal and of converting the Peguans to Christianity. For the attainment of this object, he allied himself with Byinnyâ Dalà, the Governor of Martaban, who was tributary to Siam, and opened communications with the Viceroy of Goa. He failed in his object and met with his death, because he had alienated the sympathy of the people by breaking down their religious buildings and shipping off to Goa the treasures obtained therefrom in "five ships." In the plaintive words of the *Yamaing* or *history* of the Shwêmòdò Pagoda: "Maung Zingà was a heretic, who, for ten years, searched for pagodas to destroy them. Religion perished in Râmaññа, and good works were no longer performed."

The Shwêgûgalê Pagoda is in a good state of preservation. Its basement consists of a gallery containing 64 images of Buddha, each 4 feet 8 inches high, which were apparently constructed by Siamese architects. It is octagonal in shape, and is a remarkable structure. On each side is an entrance, 6 feet high by 3 feet 2 inches wide, and 7 feet 2 inches long; these entrances lead to an interior gallery, 5 feet 2 inches wide and 7 feet 3 inches high; the entire gallery, passing round the central portion, measures 246 feet.

Close to the Mazinchaung, is the **Shwênabâ Pagoda.** It contains an image sculptured in relief on a tablet of sandstone measuring 5½ feet by 4 feet. The image has an Indian cast of features, and is fabled to be shackled with fetters owing to its having once fled from Pegu. It is said that this image, as well as a similar one of the same name on the eastern face of the

[18] [To be published later in this *Journal*. With help from the Government, generously accorded, I am making an effort to restore these invaluable documents to their original condition and to preserve them from further injury.—ED.]

[19] [Through Mr. Jackson's kindness and as a result of a visit by myself to the spot, over 100 of these tablets have been secured for the Phayre Museum. Four are in the Pitt-Rivers Museum at Oxford and two in the British Museum. They represent the march, battle and defeat of a foreign (ogre) army. Those found at the other spot mentioned in this article, represent what I take to be Cambodian figures of nobles, and perhaps, ancient Siamese also. A few are inscribed in the Kyaukså (Kiousa) character. Personally, I should doubt their Indian origin.—ED.]

city, were brought away from Taikkulâ. The resemblance between them and the figure of Avalôkitêśvara[30] is very striking, and suggests the idea that they have probably been modified from an Indian original to suit new surroundings.

Near this image was picked up a small terra cotta tablet bearing a Sanskrit legend which, with other old images lying about the place, was apparently obtained by ransacking the relic-chambers of ancient pagodas. This tablet, now in the British Museum, is of peculiar interest. Some years ago half dozen similar tablets were presented to that museum, which were found at Buddha Gayâ; and the probable history of the specimen found at Pegu is that it was brought from Gayâ as part of the collection of relics procured by the Mission sent thither by king Dhammachêtî in the latter half of the 15th Century, A. D., and deposited in the relic-chamber of some pagoda erected after their return. The legend is said to be the formula of the "three refuges." The general character of the tablet, independently of the inscription on it, is distinctly Indian.[31]

The eastern face of Pegu was visited on the 5th January. The Shwêmòdò Pagoda, said to contain two hairs of Gautama Buddha enshrined by Mahâsâla and Chûḷasâla, sons of Piṇḍakamahîsêṭṭhi of Zaimgtû, was being re-gilt under the supervision of its trustees. The Pagoda was last repaired by Bôdòp'ayâ, about a hundred years ago, and a broken inscription recording this meritorious act is lying on the Pagoda platform. There is also an ancient brass bell said to have been presented by Byinnyâ Dalà after his conquest of Avâ in 1752 A. D.[32]

Like the Shwêdagôn Pagoda at Rangoon, the Shwêmòdò is a Buddhist shrine of great sanctity. Successive kings of Burma and Pegu lavished their treasures on it in repairing and enlarging it. When originally built, it was only 75 feet high, but as it now stands, it is about 288 feet high, and about 1,350 feet in circumference at the base.

A little to the north-east of the Shwêmòdò is a small hill, fabled to have been the resting-place of two *haṁsa* birds, when the region about Pegu was under the sea. At the foot of this hill are two octagonal pillars of fine granite. The length of one is about 11 feet and that of the other is about 5. They bear no inscriptions, but a tradition is current that they were erected by *kulâ*, *i. e.*, foreign or Indian, merchants, who subsequently claimed the country as their own by virtue of pre-occupation, and that they were driven out by a Talaing prince. However, the true history of the pillars appears to be that, like a similar granite pillar in the ancient town of Tenasserim (Taninðâyî) in the Mergui District, they were erected when Râmaññadêsa was subject to Siamese rule, to mark the centre of the ancient city of Haṁsâvatî, and that most probably human beings were buried alive below the pillars, in the belief that the spirits of the deceased would keep an unremitting watch over the city.

A good panoramic view of Pegu and its suburbs is obtained from the Shwêaungyô Pagoda, which is situated at the south-east corner of the city walls. At about 700 yards from the southern face is Jôtûvatî, the encampment of Alompra, who beleaguered Pegu in 1757 A. D. Within the walls are visible the sites of the palaces of the great kings of Haṁsâvatî, such as

[30] Plate LV. of *The Cave Temples of India*, by Fergusson and Burgess.

[31] [The legend of the Pegu specimen is by itself mostly illegible, but a nearly identical specimen from Gayâ at the British Museum the inscription is legible enough. It probably is some well-known formula, but it is not that of the "three refuges." There must either have been some reciprocity in the production of these votive tablets between Gayâ and other places whence pilgrims came, or the pilgrims must have induced the local artists to copy inscriptions on their particular gifts in their own various tongues, because among the British Museum specimens is one which has what appear to be imitations of the *Kyaukśâ* characters of Burma, much resembling those on the Tenasserim medals figured by Phayre in the *International Numismata Orientalia*, Vol. III., Plates III. and IV., and another has illegible imitation characters on it of some tongue unknown to the artist who made it. Sir Alexander Cunningham has figured some of these tablets, which he calls seals, in his new book, *Mahabodhi*, Plate XXIV. These are apparently from his own collection of finds at Buddha Gayâ, and there are other good samples at the South Kensington Museum, Indian Section, which are wrongly labelled there for the most part.—ED.]

[32] It is said that the Shwêdagôn was raised to its present height in the last century by the Burmese in order to overtop the Shwêmòdò of the Talaings.

Hanbâwadî S'inbyûyin known to European writers as Branginoco,[33] Yâzâdarît,[34] and Dhammachêtî. Traces of a double wall and moat are also seen, the walls being in good condition.

I have now traversed through the whole of the ancient Talaing Kingdom of Râmañña-dêśa proper. The stone inscriptions are the chief of many objects of archæological value and should, if practicable, for the purpose of preservation, be removed to the Phayre Museum at Rangoon. In the case, however, of inscriptions, whose size and weight render their removal to Rangoon unadvisable, they should be collected at some convenient and central place and arrangements should be made to protect them from the weather. If they remain *in situ* they are liable to become defaced or weather-worn. Manuscripts of historical interest are extremely scarce; the architectural structures have in too many cases been renovated in the modern style; and the religious buildings worthy of conservation are being looked after by the people. No true *stûpas* or topes, like those of India, were met with, and the enquiries instituted failed to elicit any information regarding the existence of any records, lithic or otherwise, in the Aśôka character. The absence of any records in this character, both in Râmaññadêśa and at Pagàu, whither it is supposed the Burmese conquerors removed their spoils of war, throws considerable doubt on the authenticity of the account relating to the mission of Sôṇa and Uttara at the conclusion of the Third Council, as stated in the Mahâvaṁsa and other Buddhist books. The question, however, may be considered to be an open one, until the information afforded by Talaing, Cambodian, and Siamese records, shall have helped its solution.

[33] ["Branginoco" represents the title Bayin Naung, perhaps then pronounced Bhurin Nôṅ. It is spelt Bhuraṅ Nôṅ.—Ed.]

[34] [This word *Yâzâdarît* is spelt *Râjâdirâj* and seems to clearly equal *Râjâdhirâja*. I may as well note that *Ydzâ-di-badi*, *Narâ-di-badi*, *Sênâ-di-badi*, and similar titles in books about Burma are simply the familiar *Râjâdhipati*, *Narâdhipati*, *Sênâdhipati*, etc., in disguise. The *Di-ba-di* title, which has puzzled so many writers, is really always the latter part of some title, which includes the term *adhipati*, 'ruler, regent, king,' and means that the holder called himself 'overlord of ———,' whatever the first part of the word might mean.—Ed.]